

The Flame

January/February 2022

Called to Do What JESUS Did

by Bart Schuchts

We are living in a unique time in history, rife with scandal, political divide, uncertainty... Many are troubled, afraid, angry, and unsure what is next; yet we have a hope that goes beyond circumstances. God is equipping and empowering his people for such a time as this.

In light of the time we are living in, perhaps these three lessons could be of benefit to pass along:

1. Proper perspective.
2. Jesus' mission.
3. Holy Spirit is teacher.

1. Proper perspective:

While our human emotion can struggle to grasp the uncertainty around us, a higher ground is available to stand upon. At many of the events where I speak - with John Paul II Healing Center as well as Church On Fire - I start with this simple analogy on perspective:

Have you ever been in the back of a crowded elevator? Imagine being a little child sandwiched in the back. What do you see?

Elbows and butts. Imagine if your tall father is in the elevator with you. He picks you up. You now see over the top of people's heads. If the elevator door opens on the edge of a cliff, on a beautiful clear day, you now see the far reaching panoramic view. In the Father's arms, our perspective changes from seeing elbows and butts, to seeing over the top of people's heads, to seeing as far as the eye can see.

The Father wants to lift us up beyond the "elbows and butts" to see what he sees. God is always with us (Heb 13:5), even in the "back of a crowded elevator" sandwiched in behind today's "elbows and butts".

He is inviting us to see him, be with him, and represent him to a world desperate to be uplifted by a good, loving and powerful Father.

2. Jesus' mission:

"Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father" (Jn 14:12).

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Dear Readers of the Flame,

My parish has recently partnered with an organization called Evangelical Catholic. The purpose of this ministry is to train Catholics to become missionary disciples. From my viewpoint, it is the most thorough type of training available for Catholic laity in parish settings.

One of the daily prayer exercises for those in training with Evangelical Catholic focused on this quote from the encyclical *The Mission of the Redeemer* by St. John Paul II.

The subject of proclamation is Christ who was crucified, died and is risen: through him is accomplished our full and authentic liberation from evil, sin and death; through him God bestows “new life” that is divine and eternal. This is the “Good News” which changes man and his history, and which all peoples have a right to hear. This proclamation is to be made within the context of the lives of the individuals and peoples who receive it. It is to be made with an attitude of love and esteem toward those who hear it, in language which is practical and adapted to the situation. In this proclamation the Spirit is at work and establishes a communion between the missionary and his hearers, a communion which is possible inasmuch as both enter into communion with God the Father through Christ. (#44, §3)

I found this paragraph an amazing summary of the gospel message, to whom it is to be communicated, how it is to be communicated and what makes it effective. Let me highlight some of its key points.

The heart of the Good News is Jesus Himself, crucified, died and risen who liberates from evil, sin and death.

This fundamental tenet can be easily overlooked. As important as it is to better this world, the message of the gospel focuses on changing people. Genuinely converted people will make the world a better place. They will seek to improve this world because they desire to please their Lord. Also, living for the Lord will keep us from living for the world in a way that is destructive for both the person and the world. Having a hope that is eternal and based on God will keep people from simply striving for more of the world.

All peoples have a right to hear this Good News.

We live in an age focused on personal rights. Do we believe that each person has the right to hear about Jesus? If they have the right to hear the gospel, it means that we have an obligation to share it with them. As individuals, we do not want to trample on their rights by muzzling our mouths. Also, because people have a right to hear the gospel, governments do not have the right to suppress the gospel.

This proclamation is to be made with an attitude of love and esteem toward those who hear it.

We need to approach people with love and esteem. We need to beg the Holy Spirit to give us that *perfect love which casts out fear* (see I John 4:18). Fear of rejection inhibits our ability to share our faith and makes us overly defensive about it. Love and esteem for people produces a zeal for souls that helps the hearer feel that we really care for them.

It is to be proclaimed in language that is practical and adapted to the situation.

Jesus literally met people where they were at: in their fishing boats (Peter, James and John), at their office (Matthew) and even by the trunk of a tree (Zacchaeus). He spoke to them using stories and images from daily life. If we share our faith using only religious clichés or pious thoughts, we may hurt more than help the cause. We need to bring our faith in Christ to people in ways that connect with them where they are at.

In proclamation the Spirit is at work and establishes a communion between the missionary and his hearers.

Prayer is the key. Prayer keeps us connected with Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. Also, intercessory prayer brings God’s grace to work in the hearts and minds of the hearers. If we are genuinely striving to deepen our relationship with the Lord and are praying for those we minister to, God will be at work in their lives before we share, while we share and after we share. The Spirit will create a lifegiving relationship with those we serve. This *“communion is possible because both the proclaimer and those receiving the message enter into communion with God the Father through Christ.”*

St. John begins his gospel with these words:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:1-5)

So many people are in the dark about life. Some recognize the absurdity of their situation. Many seem to try to find life through distraction and escape. Others make a god of their work or money or even people.

The goal of evangelization is to bring people back to God, who “delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.” (Colossians 1:13-14) He has called us “out darkness into his wonderful light.” (I Peter 2:9)

What we have seen and heard we proclaim now...so that (others) may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ...so that our joy may be complete. (I John 1:3-4)

Let us ask the Holy Spirit to make us effective witnesses of Jesus. We want to brighten up our darkened world.

In Christ,

Fr. Bob Franco

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Catholic Renewal Ministries Traveling Charismatic Mass



FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

**Praise & Worship 7:00 p.m.
Liturgy Begins at 7:30 p.m.**

**Fr. Bob Franco
Celebrant**

**Healing Prayers
Following Mass**

**Contact Fr. Bob Franco
440-327-2201
or
CRM at 440-944-9445**

crmweb.org



**SAINT PETER PARISH
35777 Center Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039**

Invite a Friend to the Joining of Heaven & Earth!

Catholic Renewal Ministries Events

Prayer Group Information

Our Lady of Angels Prayer Group continues to meet to praise our Lord. We meet in the cafeteria of Our Lady of Angels Parish at 6:30 pm every Tuesday evening for the recitation of the Holy Rosary and then continue with Praise and Worship until 8:00pm. All are welcome. Please phone Don Lawrence at 1.740.424.4704 for more information (leave a message!) Thank you.

SS. Cosmas and Damian Charismatic Prayer Group meets every Sunday at 7:00 p.m. in the church gathering area under the Holy Spirit Dove. The prayer meeting is also streamed live on SS. Cosmas and Damian Facebook page. Come and experience vibrant praise and worship, intercessory and healing prayer, and scripture sharing.

Do you want to know Jesus in a deeper way? Are you looking to go deeper in your faith? Come and check out our church community of believers. To contact us or be on the prayer group email list call 330-310-2595 or email dennycarleton@sbcglobal.net

The **Living Word Healing Prayer Ministry** at St. Ambrose Parish in Brunswick is now meeting again face to face. Our meeting days have changed from what they were previously. We are now meeting on the first and third Wednesdays of every month from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in our Chapel.

We allow the Winds of the Spirit to flow over us as we praise the Lord through music, instruction, and group reflection. We allow time for God to open our hearts and our minds as we listen for His Word both through Scripture and Word of Knowledge. Every meeting ends with healing prayer as we ask Jesus to come to us in a special way to heal our brokenness and touch us with His Love. All are invited to join us as we praise and worship the Living God!

For more information, please contact Marian Iglai at: marianiglai@gmail.com.

St. Hilary's Prayer Group in Fairlawn is meeting face-to-face (masks and distancing optional) from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays either in the parish library on the first floor of the church or downstairs in the gathering area. There is an elevator to that level. Questions? please call Jim at 330-612-5969.

The **Holy Spirt Prayer Group** of St. Mary Church in Hudson is a Charismatic Holy Spirt led prayer group that meets the first and third Saturdays of the each month year around. We meet from 10am to 11:30 am in the chapel. The main focus of our meeting is to praise and worship the living God. We ask the Holy Spirit to minister to us and take us to the heart of the Father. We not only offer praise and worship but also periods of silent prayer to seek and hear God's words and His messages to us. We share words of God, share stories, and offer intercessory prayers for hurting and suffering brothers and sisters.

Our prayer group offers a monthly healing prayer service also. For further information, please contact us at HealingPrayers@stmaryhudson.cc.

The Holy Spirit Prayer Group of St. Mary Church hosts an in person **Healing Prayer Service** on the first Sunday of each month, except in July and September of this year. For those months the service will be held on the second Sundays. The service will be held in the chapel from 12:30-1:30 pm.

Our prayer teams will be available to pray for the healings of your body, body and spirit. Fr. Larry will, depending on his availability, offer an anointing for those seriously ill, preparing for surgery, or weak with aging.

We encourage you to submit your prayer requests to healingprayers@stmaryhudson.cc. St. Mary Church is located at 340 N. Main St., Hudson 44236, Tel: 330-653-8118.

Happy New Year!

Catholic Renewal Ministries Events

(Prayer Group Information continued)

The **Bukas Loob sa Diyos** (BLD) or in English - **Open in Spirit to God** (OSG), is a Filipino Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community. While the majority of BLD members are from the Philippines, it also includes other brothers and sisters of many nationalities and heritage backgrounds. We meet every Thursday, at 7:30 pm at the Mary Queen of Peace Chapel, 4423 Pearl Rd, Cleveland, OH 44109. We hold weekly praise and worship service in-person. Also, on the first Thursday of each month, we celebrate a mass followed by a healing service.

We are a communion of families and a community of persons called together as one people through the moment of encounter and a process of renewal to a relationship of faith, hope, and love with God. We conduct marriage encounter programs, solo person encounters, single encounters, family encounters and life in the spirit seminars.

For more information, please contact Rudy and Fe Fontilla at (440) 403-5719 or email: rudyfontilla1975@yahoo.com.



Peter's Shadow will join with Healing Waters Unbound Ministry at St. Hilary in Fairlawn on Friday, **January 21, 2022**, for a **Night of Healing** in conjunction with the UnBound Conference featuring Matt Lozano of Heart of the Father Ministries. The service will begin after the 7:00 PM Mass. The celebrant for the Mass will be Fr. Jacob Bearer. ST. Hilary Church is located at 2750 W. Market St. in Fairlawn 44333.

Join us for a Night of Healing Prayer on January 21st. For more information, please call 234-206-0263.

Catholic Renewal Ministries will host a **Charismatic Mass** on **Friday, January 28th, at 7:00 p.m.**, at St. Peter Parish, 35777 Center Ridge Rd., North Ridgeville 44039. Fr. Bob Franco will be the celebrant. Praise and worship will begin at 7:00 and the liturgy will start at 7:30. Healing prayer teams will be available after mass for individual prayer, and there will also be a social after mass. For more information, please contact Fr. Franco at 440-327-2201 or CRM at 440-944-9445.

Come and bring a friend! This will be a time to truly encounter the Lord.

Peter's Shadow will conduct an **Afternoon of Healing Prayer** at St. Luke Church in Lakewood on **Sunday, February 6, 2022**, beginning at 12 noon. St. Luke Church is located at the intersection of Clifton Blvd. & Bunts Rd. in Lakewood 44107.



VISIT US ONLINE:
crmweb.org

CRM and Prayer Group Events

SAVE THE DATE

Catholic Renewal Ministry 39th Annual Conference

Date: July 16, 2022

Location: St. Albert the Great, North Royalton

Speakers: Bishop Sam Jacobs, The Disciples of the Lord Jesus

More details coming soon. Watch the CRM Website (www.crmweb.org).

“No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.” (1 COR 2:11)

Now God’s Spirit, who reveals God, makes known to us Christ, his Word, his living Utterance, but the Spirit does not speak of himself. The Spirit who “has spoken through the prophets” makes us hear the Father’s Word, but we do not hear the Spirit himself.



We know him only in the movement by which he reveals the Word to us and disposes us to welcome him in faith. The Spirit of truth who “unveils” Christ to us “will not speak on his own.” Such properly divine self-effacement explains why “the world cannot receive [him], because it neither sees him nor knows him,” while those who believe in Christ know the Spirit because he dwells with them.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church 687)

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Jesus has empowered and equipped us to do the works that he does... Wow. Think about that for a second. What did Jesus do? What would happen if we actually took Jesus up on this offer? What might the Church look like?

Through our Catholic faith, we have been equipped and empowered through Baptism and Confirmation to live into Christ's mission: "It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost" (CCC 1302).

Pentecost equipped us to live into Christ's mission. Yet how many Catholics even realize we have been equipped through Confirmation? It's as if we have been given a deposit of millions of dollars into our account, yet don't know the account number. Jesus has empowered and equipped us to participate with him in what he is doing; therefore it is important that we understand what Jesus has given to us.

3. The Holy Spirit is our teacher.

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything" (Jn 14:26).

The Holy Spirit is our teacher and he is the One who will reveal what the Father is doing. It's important that we rely upon the Holy Spirit to empower and equip us to fulfill Christ's mission on the earth today.

This is the "secret sauce" of ministry: invite and rely upon the Holy Spirit.

In summary:

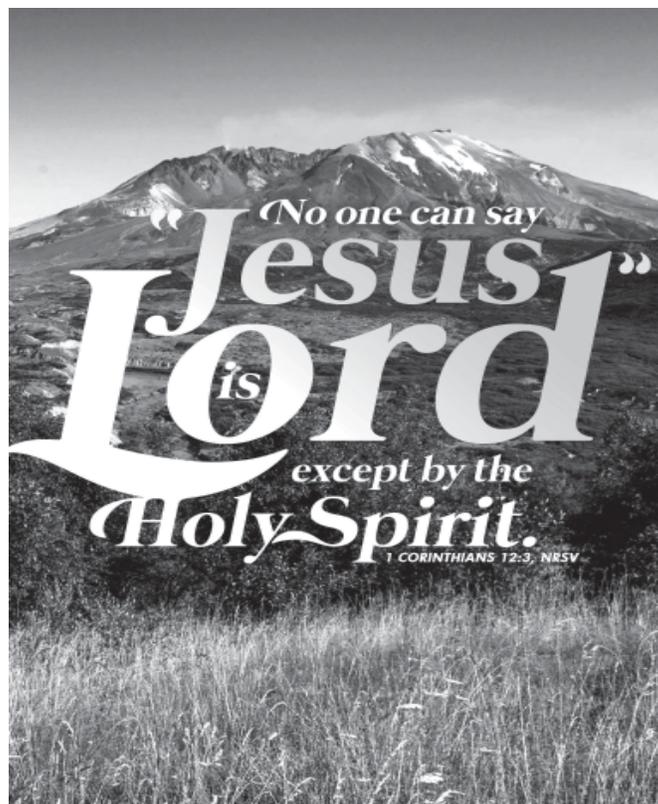
1. **Perspective:** It's crucial that we allow the Father to lift us up and show us what he sees.
2. **Mission:** We are called to do the things that Jesus did.
3. **Holy Spirit:** We are to rely upon the Holy Spirit as our teacher.

Enjoy the journey.

"Remember, I am with you always"
Jesus (Mt 28:20).

Bart Schuchts has been instrumental in the growth of the John Paul II Healing Center in Tallahassee, Florida. He is a regular speaker at conferences and retreats. www.churchonfire.live

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